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The
Borough of Daventry.



REPORT


OF THE

Medical Officer of Health,

FOR THE YEAR

1914.

15th March, 1915.



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Report

OF

The Medical Officer of Health.

TO THE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF
THE DAVENTRY TOWN COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN.

I have the honour of presenting my Report for the Year 1914, as follows:—

A.—Natural and Social Conditions of the District.

Daventry (area of borough 3427 acres) is situated in a hilly district, 480 feet above sea level, 12 miles W. of Northampton, and 11 miles S.E. of Rugby. The soil is principally a brownish loam on a substratum of porous rock or gravel; the greater part of the land surrounding the town is meadow and pasture land.

Population.

Census, 1911	...	...	...	3517
Estimated, 1914	...	...	...	3516
Density of population per acre	...			1.02

The amount of Poor Law Relief for the year was £163 8s. 7d.

The average weekly number of Inmates at the Workhouse, 70.

The principal landowners live outside the District with one or two exceptions, but there are several small freeholders.

The staple trade of the town is boot and shoe manufacture. There is one cycle factory. These give employment to about 500 hands. A good number of agricultural labourers are resident in the town, employed within or just outside the District.

The Borough is supplied with an Isolation Hospital (for infectious cases) situated about 1 mile from the town and providing adequate accommodation for 16 patients.

The nearest General Hospital is at Northampton.

B.—Sanitary Circumstances of the District.

Water Supply.

From two sources—

1. Dodford: the property of the Corporation—a *constant* and abundant supply—derived from a deep spring in the middle lias. The water is pure but very hard, 20° ; this hardness is reduced to about 8° by means of a softening process (Lassen & Hjorts), carried out on Borough Hill, $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from the town, by means of which the water is greatly improved for domestic purposes.

2. Borough Hill Supply—*intermittent*—a private supply from shallow springs flowing from the Northampton Sands at the junction with the clay beds, capable of supplying one-third of the town. This water is of excellent quality and possesses only a small degree of hardness.

Pollution of Streams and Rivers.

There are two small streams (brooks) running through the town, both running to the Grand Junction Canal reservoir. No instance of pollution has come to my notice.

Drainage and Sewerage.

This is well carried out and in every way satisfactory—the sewage is conveyed to Sewage Works and Farm for proper treatment and disposal.

Closet Accommodation.

Water closets to *every* house, except in solitary houses away from the town where the privy system is still retained; the majority of the cottages in the borough are not supplied with a flushing apparatus.

Scavenging.

House refuse and ashes are removed to Sewage Works on certain days of the week by the Corporation, and there incinerated.

Sanitary Inspection of the District.

A weekly inspection of lodging houses has been made throughout the year, and all cow-sheds, dairies, slaughterhouses, bakehouses and workshops visited at frequent intervals, lime-washing being carried out at the required times.

Seven new drains have been inspected, and 5 defective drains repaired. 8 drains have been tested

There were 4 cases of blocked W.C's.

Six nuisances have been removed.

One case of Anthrax in a bullock was reported in December.

Schools.

Four in number. (1) Grammar School (mixed).
(2) Girls' High School.
(3) and (4) Public Elementary Schools.

The Abbey Infants School was closed for one week (Jan. 22-29) owing to the prevalence of influenza colds amongst the children—no other school closure during the year.

The general health of the children attending the Public Elementary Schools has been especially good and bears testimony to the improvement in their welfare, derived from the new buildings erected last year.

Eight cases of Ringworm, and three cases of Chicken Pox have been reported to me during the period May-December by the School Authorities.

This notification of *any* infectious disease occurring in the Public Elementary Schools will, I hope, materially aid in preventing school closure by allowing early investigation of the outbreak of epidemic disease and *early* exclusion from school of "contacts" or infectious children.

Food.

a. Milk Supply—satisfactory. No case of adulteration or contamination has been reported.

Milk-shops, Dairies—quite satisfactory.

Cow-sheds—satisfactory, except in two cases where ventilation was insufficient.

b. Other Foods. No unsound food discovered, and no carcasses or parts of carcasses condemned.

Premises where foods are prepared, stored or exposed for sale—satisfactory.

The condition of the Bakehouses is satisfactory—with one exception, where a notice has been served, and the owners have promised to carry out the required alterations.

Slaughterhouses.

These have to be frequently inspected and sufficient attention is not paid to proper cleansing of walls and floors after slaughtering. This matter has been brought to the notice of the owners, as it is of the utmost importance.

Owing to want of cleanliness on the part of those using the premises, the Public Slaughterhouse has been closed (June, 1914).

Housing.

65 houses were inspected during the year—in most of these the work required to be carried out to place them in proper habitable repair has been completed—where not completed the work is in hand.

The number of re-inspections made is not recorded.

17 preliminary notices were served under the House and Town Planning Act, 1909, and 8 statutory notices.

Two cases of over-crowding occurred, both of which were remedied.

Tabular Statement. (Article 5 Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations 1910.—

No. of dwelling houses inspected	...	...	65
„ „ „ considered unfit for habitation	...	...	1
No. of representations made to local Authority with view to making closing order...	...	...	1
No. of closing orders made	...	...	0
No. of dwelling houses the defects of which were remedied without the making of closing order	...	...	1

The defects found were :—

General repairs; defective drainage, roofs, floors and walls; dirty walls and ceilings; want of paving.

The housing of the working classes in the Borough is adequate.

Workshops, Workplaces.

The administration of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, in the Borough is satisfactory. One written notice was made in the Case of a Bakehouse, and the defect is not yet remedied.

C.—Sanitary Administration of the District.

1. **Staff**—One Medical Officer of Health and one Sanitary Inspector.

2. **The 'Sanatorium'** is capable of accommodating 12 cases in the new block and 4 in the old wing, 16 in all, and is in charge of two caretakers, resident in the building throughout the year, who undertake the duties of nursing, etc., when required. The building is in every way sufficient for the requirements of the Borough, and is well kept.

3 cases of Scarlet Fever have been admitted during the year.

During the continuance of the War it has been decided by mutual arrangement between the Daventry Town and Rural District Councils that the Sanatorium be used for Smallpox cases that may occur in the Borough and Rural District. Any other infectious disease requiring removal from home being admitted to the Rural District Isolation Hospital at Staverton.

The proposed installation of the telephone at the 'Sanatorium' will remedy a much felt want. It is to be regretted that there is still no Disinfecting Apparatus in the building.

3. **Administration of Local Acts or General Adoptive Acts.**—The following Acts have been adopted since April 9th, 1889.

Infectious Disease (Notification) Act, 1889.

Infectious Disease (Prevention) Act, 1890.

Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1890, Parts 2, 3, 4, 5.

Private Street Works Act, 1892.

Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907, Parts 2, 3, 4, 5 (except Sections 43 and 61).

Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907, Part 6 (Recreation Grounds).

Notification of Births Act, 1907. (Adopted March, 1914—came into force May 1st, 1914.)

4. **Special Arrangements made in consequences of the**

War.—The Isolation Hospital (Sanatorium) to be used for cases of Smallpox only, that may occur in the Daventry Borough or Rural District during the continuance of the War.

No troops have as yet been quartered in the Borough.

D.—Prevalence of and Control over Acute Infectious Diseases.

During the year 21 cases of infectious disease were notified.

					Deaths.
Erysipelas ...	...	...	7	...	0
Scarlet Fever	...	...	3	...	0
Puerperal Fever	...	...	2	...	1
Polio myelitis	...	...	1	...	0
Pulmonary Tuberculosis...			7	...	1
Other Tuberculosis Diseases			1	...	0
			<hr/> 21		<hr/> 2
			<hr/>		<hr/>

Erysipelas.

7 cases were reported, against 2 in 1913—all recovered.

Scarlet Fever.

These cases were all removed to the Sanatorium, and occurred about the same time (February)—the origin was obscure.

Puerperal Fever.

The sanitary condition of the house in both cases was satisfactory.

Chicken Pox.

3 cases (in one house) occurred during the year.

Diphtheria.

No cases occurred in the Borough—this is worthy of record considering the very great prevalence of this disease in the county during the last quarter of the year.

E.—Prevalence of and Control over Tuberculosis.

Seven cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis were notified—one death occurred.

In every case printed instructions are given to the patients and disinfectants and spitting cups provided if necessary.—On receipt of notification each case is visited and subsequent visits made—on change of residence or death, disinfection of rooms, bedding, etc., is carried out as completely as possible.

F.—Investigation of other Diseases.

Under this heading there is nothing to report.

G.—Means for preventing Mortality in Childbirth and in Infancy.

Systematic visiting is carried out in the Borough by the County Health Visitor.—

51 visits were paid to new-born infants, and 319 subsequent visits paid. To the children born in 1913, 206 visits were made during the year.

Of the 1914 infants visited, the condition at the 1st visit was

Good	...	...	...	43
Fair	...	...	...	5
Weakly	...	...	...	3
				—
				51
				—
Breast fed	...	...	...	30
Partly Breast fed	...	...	...	5
Bottle fed...	...	...	...	16
				—
				51
				—

The Notification of Births Act, 1907, was adopted in March, coming into force from May 1st, 1914.

No case of Ophthalmia Neonatorum, now a notifiable disease, occurred in the Borough.

H.—Vital Statistics of the District.

Births.

		Legitimate.		Illegitimate.		
Males	...	33	...	2	...	35
Females	...	35	...	3	...	38
		—		—		—
		68		5	Total	73

Birth rate—20·18 per 1,000, the same as for the two previous years.

No births occurred in the Workhouse during the year.

Deaths.

50 deaths were registered during the year, including 11 non-residents—the deaths of 5 residents were registered outside the District.

			Residents.		Non-Residents.		Total.
Daventry (excluding Workhouse)	34	...	0	...	34		
Workhouse	...	...	5	...	11	...	16
Sanatorium	...	...	0	...	0	...	0
			—		—		—
			39		11		50

The nett No. of deaths belonging to the District is therefore $39 + 5 = 44$, which gives a death rate of **12·51** (or corrected rate by use of the 'factor' for the District— $7843 \times 12·51 = 9·81$).

The rates for previous years were as follows:—

1909	...	10·84	} uncorrected.
1910	...	11·37	
1911	...	11·65	
1912	...	12·51	
1913	...	16·49	

The death-rate this year thus compares very favourably with that of previous years.

Deaths at various ages.

(Urban cases only.)

				No. of Deaths.		Rate per 1,000 of Population.
Under 1 year	...	...	...	7	...	1·96
Between 1 and 2 years		...	...	1	...	·28
„ 2 „ 5	„	...	...	—	...	—
„ 5 „ 15	„	...	...	—	...	—
„ 15 „ 25	„	...	...	—	...	—
„ 25 „ 45	„	...	...	4	...	1·12
„ 45 „ 65	„	...	...	12	...	3·40
Over 65 years	...	...	...	20	...	5·68
				—		
				44		

Infant Mortality.—7 deaths under one year of age, and 73 births, giving a rate of 95·89 per 1,000 births.

Analysis of Causes of Deaths.

					No. of Deaths.		Rate per 1,000 of Population.
Influenza	...	...	...	...	1	...	·28
Phthisis...	...	...	...	...	1	...	·28
Cancer ...	...	...	...	...	2	...	·56
Meningitis	...	...	...	...	1	...	·28
Organic Heart Disease	...	...	...	...	3	...	·85
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	1	...	·28
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	3	...	·85
Other Respiratory Diseases ...	...	...	...	...	1	...	·28
Nephritis and Bright's Disease	...	...	...	...	4	...	1·12
Puerperal Fever	...	...	...	...	1	...	·28
Premature Birth	...	...	...	...	3	...	·85
Violent Deaths (excluding Suicide)...	...	...	...	...	1	...	·28
Suicide ...	...	...	...	...	1	...	·28
Other Defined Diseases	...	...	...	...	21	...	5·95

Examination of the above tables shews a marked decrease in the number of deaths from infectious diseases during the year, and also a very small death rate below the age of 45 years as compared with previous years:—

1911	...	15
1912	...	15
1913	...	22
1914	...	13

The year has been a very healthy one for the Borough, particularly one must notice the absence of any epidemic and of any special prevalence of particular disease.

The adoption of the Notification of Births Act is to be welcomed as a useful aid to diminishing infantile mortality by allowing a more thorough visiting of new-born infants to be carried out.

The softening of the Town Water Supply is also to be recorded and should be an improvement much appreciated by householders.

I trust the ensuing year will provide as favourable a report as 1914, and

Beg to remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

C. H. SEDGWICK,

March 15th, 1915.

Medical Officer of Health.

